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INFO RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 2288  
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE IMMEDIATE 2494  
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN IMMEDIATE 8778  
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES IMMEDIATE 2651  
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RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001432

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NASA/OER (JOHN HALL), STATE FOR G, EUR/WE AND OES/SAT,  
PARIS FOR NASA EUROPEAN REP (MILLER)

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SUBJECT: ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER RAISES ALPHA MAGNETIC  
SPECTROMETER WITH PRESIDENT BUSH

Classified By: A/DCM DAVID PEARCE, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 4.

¶2. (C/NF) During President Bush's June 9 meeting in Rome, Prime Minister Romano Prodi raised the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer (aka anti-matter spectrometer - AMS) experiment, saying that the GOI hoped the AMS would be carried on the planned October Space Shuttle flight, and expressing concern that the U.S. might cancel the launch. We understand that the Italian Deputy Chief of Mission also raised AMS recently in Washington.

¶3. (C/NF) The Italian Space Agency (ASI), which is involved only marginally in the AMS experiment, has been aware for approximately a year that NASA had determined that there was no possibility for the AMS to be manifested on the remaining Space Shuttle flights before the Shuttle is retired in 2010. AMS's fate was discussed on June 1 during NASA Deputy Administrator Shana Dale's meeting with the new ASI President, Giovanni Fabrizio Bignami, who reacted with understanding when she confirmed NASA's difficult decision, which was based on the agency's priorities to retire the Shuttle while also meeting U.S. commitments to international partners to complete construction of the International Space Station (ISS). We also understand that Bignami did not raise AMS during his June 19 meeting with Administrator Griffin. We therefore consider it probable that the impetus behind Prodi's action comes from the Ministry of Universities and Research and the National Institute of Nuclear Physics (INFN), which provided Italy's \$312 million contribution to the experiment.

¶4. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Department and NASA, please provide points for the Embassy to reply to the Prime Minister, including, if appropriate, information on possible NASA non-Shuttle or other non-NASA flight alternatives for the AMS instrument. END ACTION REQUEST.  
Spogli